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ABSTRACT

This survey determined the proportion of Arizona high school graduates who continued their educations, became employed, enlisted in the military, or chose another alternative. Surveys mailed to 5,288 graduates of Arizona public schools were completed and returned by 1,347. Female and white students were more likely to respond. At graduation, 86 percent of the respondents planned to continue their educations, 55 percent to be employed, 5 percent to enlist in the military, and 5 percent to become a homemaker or a volunteer. Eighty-two percent of the respondents enrolled in some form of postsecondary education after graduation in 1991, and 77 percent expected to be enrolled in 1992. Asians were most likely to have enrolled (97 percent) and American Indians were least likely to enroll (58 percent). Half had been gainfully employed more than 6 months of the year since graduation, and 83 percent of those continuing in school were also working. Respondents were basically satisfied with their high school experiences as preparation, with very good or satisfactory ratings given by 85 percent. In spite of these generally favorable ratings, most of the respondents' voluntary comments expressed frustration and disillusionment. Comparisons with the class of 1989 indicate that 1991 graduates face a more hostile world, or were less well prepared, since both employment and enrollment in postsecondary education declined over the 2 years. Twenty tables present responses and findings. Five appendixes discuss survey methodology and responses and include survey instruments. (SLD)

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GRADUATE ACTIVITY SURVEY

CLASS OF 1991

ONE YEAR AFTER GRADUATION

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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October 1992

TM 020267

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I. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Goals for Educational Excellence legislation, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is required to conduct a follow-up study of the graduates of Arizona public schools. The Arizona Student Assessment Plan uses high school graduate outcomes as one means of evaluating the success of educational reform efforts.

A pilot study was conducted last year to test the survey methodology and gather basic information about graduates from the Class of 1989. This year, graduates from the Class of 1991 were surveyed to determine what proportions of Arizona high school graduates continue their education, become employed, enlist in the military, or choose other alternatives.

This type of graduate follow-up study has been conducted independently by some of the high schools or school districts, and a similar survey of vocational education students is conducted annually by ADE, but a survey of Arizona high school graduates in general had not been conducted before the pilot study of the Class of 1989.

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October 1992

II. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Arizona Student Assessment Plan uses high school graduate outcomes as one means of evaluating the success of educational reform efforts. The objective of this survey was to determine what proportion of Arizona high school graduates continue their education, become employed, enlist in the military, or choose other alternatives. Surveys were mailed to 5,288 randomly selected graduates of Arizona public schools. One thousand three hundred forty seven graduates, representing 91 high schools, responded to the survey.

Certain segments of the Class of 1991 (Females, Whites, and graduates with a higher cumulative grade point average) were more likely to respond, affecting some of the conclusions that may be drawn from the survey.

Plans at Graduation - At graduation, 86% of the respondents planned to continue their education; 55% intended to be employed; 5% planned to enlist in military service; and 5% intended to become a homemaker or volunteer.

Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education - Of these respondents, 82% enrolled in some form of post-secondary education after graduation in 1991 and 77% intend to be enrolled in Fall of 1992. The proportion of respondents who enrolled in a post-secondary program increased with higher grade point averages (GPAs). Asian respondents were the most likely to have enrolled (97%) and American Indian respondents were the least likely to have enrolled (58%). A large majority (87%) of the graduates who enrolled in community colleges and universities chose Arizona schools.

If these respondents are typical of all Arizona high school graduates with similar GPAs, it could be estimated that 63% of our high school graduates enroll in some form of post-secondary education: approximately 42% choose a community college in state, 15% enroll in a four year university in Arizona, 5% enroll in out-of-state universities, 2% in community colleges out of state, and 4% enroll in a technical training program.

University students were more likely to have taken and earned a full load of course credits (12 or more credits per semester) than community college students, and they were slightly less likely to quit before the year was over.

Employment - Half of the respondents had been gainfully employed more than six months of the year since their graduation. Of those who had enrolled in a post-secondary educational program, 83% were also working, but they were less likely to be working in full-time positions than those who were employed but not attending school. Community college students, on the average, worked more months than university students. About one-fourth of the respondents were currently seeking employment.

Military Service - Only four percent of the respondents were enlisted in military service.

Not Employed, Not Enrolled, and Not in Military Service - Three percent of the respondents had not enrolled in school, had not worked since graduation, and were not in military service. Half of them were seeking employment and half were not. Half of those who were not seeking employment said they had an unpaid position, such as a religious mission.

High School Preparation - Respondents were basically satisfied with their high school experiences as preparation for the future. Eighty-five percent rated their academic high school preparation as either "Very Good" or "Satisfactory"; 30% gave their schools the highest (Very Good) rating. Those who enrolled in post-secondary education programs were more likely to rate their high schools Very Good academically (31%) than those who did not enroll (20%).

In spite of generally favorable ratings on the survey question, most of the respondents' voluntary comments expressed frustration and disillusionment. The graduates communicated sentiments such as, "I was not prepared in any way for the work force or college," "The teachers should have been more demanding," and "They babied us so much that adjusting to college courses was somewhat difficult". Graduates also expressed disappointment with the shortage of post-secondary financial aid.

In summary, the graduate outcomes from these respondents are shown in the table below. The percentages total more than 100 because graduates could be involved in more than one activity.

Table 1
Graduate Activities One Year After Graduation

Activity	Number	Percent
Enrolled in post-secondary education, not employed	185	14%
Enrolled in post-secondary education and employed	915	68%
Employed, not enrolled in post-secondary education	216	16%
Military	49	4%
Never enrolled, employed, or in military	34	3%
Seeking employment	15	1%
Not seeking employment	14	1%
Did not answer	5	--%

Trends in Enrollment and Employment Since the Survey of the Class of 1989

The graduating Class of 1991 encountered a more hostile world than did the Class of 1989, or they were less well prepared. Both employment and enrollment in a post-secondary education program declined over the two years.

Enrollment in a post-secondary education program was down from 86% of the survey respondents in the Class of 1989 to 82% of the Class of 1991. In particular, graduates with lower high school GPAs were less likely in 1991 to enroll in a post-secondary education program. In the general population of Arizona high school graduates, it is estimated that

enrollment declined from 69% of the 1989 graduates to 63% of the 1991 graduates. The decline was noted in all ethnic groups except Asians, with the most serious decline in the American Indian population, which declined from 87% of the 1989 respondents to 58% of the 1991 respondents.

More 1991 graduates chose Arizona schools than did 1989 graduates and there was a noticeable shift from in-state universities to in-state community colleges. In 1989, 35% of the respondents who enrolled in a post-secondary program chose community colleges; in 1991, 50% made that choice. In-state universities lost students at all GPA levels, but the loss was greater from higher GPA levels. There was a large increase in the number of students with the highest GPAs attending out-of-state universities (48% in 1991, compared to 22% in 1989).

Employment of the new graduates also declined. While 75% of the respondents in 1989 were gainfully employed, 63% of the respondents in 1991 were currently employed. A higher proportion of those who are unemployed are seeking full-time work now; fewer are unemployed by choice. Declining employment was noticed in all ethnic groups, but it was most noticeable in the Hispanic and American Indian populations.

Approximately the same proportion of graduates (4 to 5%) had enlisted in military service in both studies.

About five percent of the Class of 1989 respondents had not enrolled in school, were unemployed and were not in military service two years after graduation. In this study, about three percent of the respondents fell into that category. In both studies, approximately half of those graduates were seeking employment and half were unemployed by choice or were employed in unpaid positions.

In spite of declining enrollment and employment, the graduates' perceptions about their high school preparation remained the same: approximately 85% of the respondents in both classes rated their school "Very Good" or "Satisfactory".

The 1991 survey provided more information about full-time and part-time enrollment and employment, college credits earned, reasons for leaving post-secondary education, parents' level of education, and problems finding employment. These factors will be analyzed in future studies to determine other trends over time.

III. ANALYSIS

A. Sample and Respondent Profile

Fifty school districts were selected to participate in the survey, based on their number of graduates and location. (See Appendix A, Methodology and Limitations.) ADE mailed the survey form and a cover letter to 5,288 graduates from the Class of 1991. Since 358 surveys were returned by the postal service as undeliverable, it was presumed that 4,930 surveys reached the selected graduates. The 1,347 graduates who completed and returned their surveys to ADE before August 10, 1992 represent a response rate of 27%. The respondents represent 47 school districts, 91 high schools, and slightly more than 4% of the 1991 graduates of Arizona public high schools. (See Appendix B, Response Rate for Participating School Districts.)

The responses overrepresent certain segments of the 1991 graduates. For example, females comprised 51% of all Arizona public school graduates in 1991, but they comprise 58% of the respondents. Sixty-eight percent of the 1991 graduates were White, but 72% of the respondents were White. Black graduates were underrepresented: 1% of the survey respondents were Black, compared to 4% of the 1991 graduates. The following table shows the proportion of ethnic and gender representation in the Class of 1991 graduates and the survey responses.

Table 2
Proportions of Graduates and Respondents by Ethnicity and Gender

Ethnicity and Gender	Proportion of Graduating Class	Proportion of Respondents
White Female	34%	42%
White Male	34%	30%
Black Female	2%	1%
Black Male	2%	1%
Hispanic Female	10%	11%
Hispanic Male	9%	7%
Indian Female	3%	2%
Indian Male	3%	2%
Asian Female	1%	2%
Asian Male	1%	1%
Ethnicity not shown	--	1%
Total Female	51%	58%
Total Male	49%	41%
Gender not shown	--	1%

For last year's Class of 1989 study, the students' cumulative GPAs at graduation were determined from their transcripts and it was noted that graduates with higher GPAs were more likely to respond to the survey[1]. This year, because transcripts were not available, the survey asked respondents to report their GPA at graduation. Again, it appears that these responses overrepresent graduates with higher GPAs.

A small sample (N=27) of the respondents' self-reported GPAs were compared to school records. Only 18% (N=5) of the self-reported GPAs were found to be accurate; 56% (N=15) overstated their actual GPA; and 26% (N=7) understated their actual GPA. Therefore, it is likely that graduates with higher GPAs are overrepresented in this study, as they were in last year's survey, **and** that respondents are somewhat likely to overstate their actual GPA. The following table shows the proportion of graduates and responses by GPA in both studies[2].

Table 3
Grade Point Averages of Graduates and Respondents

GPA	Proportion of Class of 1989 Graduates	Proportion of Class of 1989 Respondents	Proportion of Class of 1991 Respondents
1.5	7%	3%	--
2.0	22%	15%	9%
2.5	28%	23%	12%
3.0	22%	27%	32%
3.5	13%	21%	27%
4.0 and above	7%	12%	20%

B. Plans at Graduation

At graduation, 86% of the respondents planned to continue their education (74% full-time, 12% part-time); 55% intended to be employed (17% full-time, 38% part-time); 5% planned to enlist in military service; and 5% planned to be a homemaker or volunteer[3].

The graduates expressed their intent to continue their education or become employed as shown in the following table. Full-time is designated as FT; part-time is designated as PT.

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[1] The distribution of GPAs in the Class of 1989 study was based on a sample of 4,539 randomly selected transcripts.

[2] GPAs were clustered so that each GPA category included the range of GPAs which were within .25 points. GPAs from 1.25 through 1.74 = 1.5; 1.75 through 2.24 = 2.0; 2.25 through 2.74 = 2.5; 2.75 through 3.24 = 3.0; 3.25 through 3.74 = 3.5; 3.75 through 4.24 = 4.0; 4.25 or higher = 4.5.

[3] Percentages total more than 100% because respondents could indicate more than one response.

Table 4
Plans at Graduation for Post-Secondary Education and Employment

	Cases	Percent
Education FT, Employment no	510	38%
Education FT, Employment PT	410	30%
Education FT, Employment FT	77	6%
Education PT, Employment no	27	2%
Education PT, Employment PT	80	6%
Education PT, Employment FT	60	5%
Education no, Employment no	72	5%
Education no, Employment PT	15	1%
Education no, Employment FT	96	7%

The intent to continue education was most frequently expressed by Black (100%) and Asian (97%) respondents. White (86%), Hispanic (88%), and American Indian (85%) respondents indicated an intent to continue their education in approximately the same proportions. Female respondents were more likely (91%) than male respondents (79%) to have plans for post-secondary education and they were more likely (78%) than males (68%) to intend to continue their education full-time.

The expectations to enroll in a post-secondary education program increased with higher GPAs. The lower the respondent's GPA, the more likely it was that he would intend to enroll part-time rather than full-time in an educational program. The intent to enroll in an educational program was also related to the respondent's parents' level of education: expecting to enroll full-time increases and intent to enroll part-time decreases with an increase in the parents' level of education.

Fifty-five percent of the respondents intended to be employed after high school graduation, 17% in a full-time position and 38% in a part-time position. Higher proportions of White (57%) and Hispanic (53%) graduates intended to work after graduation. Asian graduates were the least likely (32%) to intend to work after graduation. Females were more likely (59%) than males (49%) to intend to work. Students with higher GPAs at graduation were less likely to intend to work, particularly full-time, than those with lower GPAs, and students whose parents had a Bachelor's degree or higher were less likely to intend to work.

Only five percent of the respondents intended to serve in the military. American Indian graduates were the most likely (8%) to plan to enlist. Students with higher GPAs were less likely to intend to enlist in military service than those with lower GPAs.

Only five percent of the respondents intended to be a homemaker or volunteer after graduation. None of the Asian graduates and few of the other minority graduates declared such an intent.

C. Actual Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education Programs

Of these respondents, 82% enrolled in some form of post-secondary education after high school, and 77% intend to be enrolled in the Fall of 1992. Of those who said they intended to continue their education full-time, 96% actually enrolled in a program. Only 67% of those who intended to attend school part-time actually enrolled. Additionally, 19% of the students who had not planned to continue their education eventually enrolled in a program.

The proportions of students who enrolled are shown by ethnicity and gender in the table below.

Table 5
Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education by Ethnicity and Gender

White Female	88%
White Male	78%
Black Female	90%
Black Male	88%
Hispanic Female	80%
Hispanic Male	72%
American Indian Female	67%
American Indian Male	48%
Asian Female	100%
Asian Male	89%
Total Female	87%
Total Male	76%
Total White	84%
Total Black	89%
Total Hispanic	77%
Total American Indian	58%
Total Asian	97%

Of those who enrolled in colleges and universities, a large majority (87%) chose Arizona schools. Thirteen percent of the graduates chose to attend colleges and universities out of state[4]. The following table shows the choices of students who enrolled in one or more post-secondary education programs[5].

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[4] The survey did not distinguish between in-state and out-of-state technical training programs.

[5] Percentages are based on the 1,100 respondents who enrolled in some form of post-secondary education. The percentages total more than 100% because respondents could have attended more than one school.

Table 6
Choice of Post-Secondary Education Program

Enrolled in a four year university in Arizona	29%
Enrolled in a community college in Arizona	50%
Enrolled in a four year university outside Arizona	9%
Enrolled in a community college outside Arizona	3%
Enrolled in a technical training program, non-military	4%
Enrolled in a technical training program, military	1%
Enrolled (type of school not specified), but discontinued	6%

Graduates with higher GPAs at graduation are more likely to enroll in a post-secondary education program, as shown in the table below.

Table 7
Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education by GPA at Graduation

1.5	50%
2.0	56%
2.5	76%
3.0	82%
3.5	88%
4.0 and above	95%

The choice of a post-secondary program was closely related to high school GPA. The following table shows the proportion of the respondents who enrolled in different types of post-secondary education programs by GPA, where known[6].

[6] High school GPA was not reported for 89 of the 1,100 graduates who enrolled in a post-secondary program. Percentages do not total 100 because some respondents enrolled in more than one program, and some of those who enrolled discontinued before the year was over and did not indicate what type of program they had attended.

Table 8
Choice of Post-Secondary Education Programs by GPA

	Arizona University	Out of State University	Arizona Comm. Coll.	Out of State Comm. Coll.	Technical Training	Not Enrolled
1.5 [7]	0%	0%	25%	0%	0%	50%
2.0	1%	2%	37%	3%	5%	44%
2.5	14%	2%	49%	1%	5%	24%
3.0	17%	3%	49%	2%	6%	18%
3.5	30%	10%	42%	3%	1%	12%
4.0	47%	16%	31%	2%	2%	5%
4.5	41%	48%	11%	0%	0%	4%

Since the likelihood of enrolling in a post-secondary program increases with GPA and this survey was overrepresented by graduates with high GPAs, it would be erroneous to assume that 82% of all Arizona high school graduates enroll in post-secondary programs. A rough estimate of the proportion of all Arizona graduates who enroll in a post-secondary program is possible by weighting the survey responses according to their GPA[8]. That is, if the choices these respondents made are representative of the choices all graduates of that GPA level made, it might be assumed that the entire Class of 1991 graduates may have made the following choices.

Table 9
Projected Choices of the Class of 1991

Enrolled in some form of post-secondary education	63%
Enrolled in four year Arizona universities	15%
Enrolled in four year universities out of state	5%
Enrolled in Arizona community colleges	42%
Enrolled in technical training programs	4%
Enrolled in community colleges out of state	2%
Not enrolled in post-secondary education	37%

Students whose parents had higher levels of education were more likely to enroll in a post-secondary program, up to a point. Approximately the same proportion of graduates enrolled if their parents had a Bachelor's degree or higher.

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[7] Percentages are not significant because there were very few responses at this GPA level.

[8] Based on the distribution of GPAs for 4,539 of the graduates of the Class of 1989, the most recent year for which transcripts were available.

Table 10
Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education by Parents' Level of Education

Less than high school	69%
High school diploma	72%
Some college education	80%
College degree	89%
Some postgraduate education	88%
Postgraduate degree	90%

Approximately 31% of the respondents (or 38% of the graduates who enrolled in a post-secondary program) enrolled in four-year universities. High school graduates who enrolled in four-year universities were more likely to have enrolled full-time and earned 12 or more credit hours per semester at college than those who enrolled in community colleges. While 78% of the graduates who enrolled in four-year universities earned 24 or more credit hours, only 52% of the community college students enrolled and earned full-time course credit.

Of the 1,100 respondents who indicated they had enrolled in a post-secondary program, 78 (or 7%) quit school before the year was over and approximately 30% of them had earned some college credits. Most had earned 12 or fewer credits and they generally reported lower GPAs on both their high school and college course work than students who did not drop out. Attrition rates were highest for American Indian students (17%) and Hispanic students (12%).

Respondents who quit before the school year was over or who were enrolled last year but do not intend to re-enroll this fall were asked their reasons for leaving school. The most prevalent reason was financial problems. The table below shows in decreasing order of occurrence the reasons for leaving school. Percentages total more than 100 because respondents could identify more than one reason.

Table 11
Respondents' Reasons for Leaving a Post-Secondary Education Program

Reason	Percentage
Financial problems	32%
Personal problems (illness, etc.)	22%
Other (LDS mission, travel)	21%
Did not like the school/program	14%
Academic problems	12%
Finished the program	12%

A large majority (84%) of the students who enrolled in a post-secondary program after graduation intend to re-enroll in the fall of 1992, and nearly half (48%) of those who did not enroll last year intend to enroll this fall (1992-93 school year). Those who attend in-state

universities were most likely to intend to re-enroll in the fall (96%). Students attending universities out-of-state and students attending in-state community colleges were equally likely to re-enroll (88% and 89% respectively). Students who enrolled in technical training programs, either military or non-military, and had not completed their program were the least likely to re-enroll (74%).

D. Employment

Respondents were asked how many months since graduation they had been employed in full-time or part-time paid positions. Half of the respondents had been gainfully employed more than six months; one-third had been employed, but less than six months; and 16% had not been employed since graduation in either a part-time or full-time position. Nearly two-thirds of the respondents had never worked in a full-time position, and 10% had worked the entire year since graduation in a full-time position.

Of those who had enrolled in a post-secondary program, 83% had also worked, but they were more likely to be working in a part-time position than those who were not in school. Almost one-fourth of these respondents earned full-time credits in a post-secondary program **and** worked more than six months of the year. The table below shows the proportion of respondents who had been employed by length of employment and enrollment status.

Table 12
Length of Employment by Post-Secondary Education Program

	0 Mos.	1-6 Mos.	7-12 Mos.
Arizona University	24%	49%	28%
Out-of-State University	23%	44%	33%
Arizona Community College	13%	27%	60%
Out-of-State Community College	6%	39%	55%
Technical Training - non-military	22%	35%	43%
Technical Training - military	7%	7%	86%
Not enrolled in post-secondary	13%	27%	60%

The months of employment varied by ethnic group, too. Half of the Black graduates had not worked since graduation while only 12% of the White graduates were not gainfully employed. Unemployment may be voluntary, however. The family's financial condition may not require these students to work while they attend school or pursue other activities. The following table shows employment by ethnic group. There were no major discrepancies between the sexes in their length of employment.

Table 13
Length of Employment by Ethnicity

	0 Mos.	1-6 Mos.	7-12 Mos.
White	12%	35%	52%
Black	50%	28%	22%
Hispanic	25%	27%	48%
American Indian	23%	54%	23%
Asian	29%	32%	39%

The number of months of employment was approximately the same for all the respondents, except that respondents with GPAs over 3.75 were less likely to have been employed during the year since graduation, as shown in the table below.

Table 14
Length of Employment by GPA

	0 Mos.	1-6 Mos.	7-12 Mos.
1.5[9]	25%	25%	50%
2.0	10%	35%	55%
2.5	15%	31%	54%
3.0	14%	29%	57%
3.5	15%	38%	47%
4.0	20%	42%	37%
4.5	37%	33%	30%

Respondents who were not currently employed were asked if they were seeking full-time or part-time employment. Four hundred ninety five (495) respondents, or 37% of the respondents, indicated they were not employed in a paid position. Two-thirds of the unemployed were seeking employment and one-third indicated they were not seeking employment. The current status of the respondents is shown in the table below.

[9] Percentages are not significant because there were very few responses at this GPA level.

Table 15
Current Employment Status of Respondents

Employed	63%
Unemployed[10]	37%
Not seeking employment	12%
Seeking FT employment for summer only	12%
Seeking FT employment, permanent	7%
Seeking PT employment	9%

Unemployed graduates with higher GPAs were more likely than graduates with lower GPAs to be seeking full-time employment for the summer only. The opposite was true for those seeking full-time permanent work: the higher the GPA level, the less likely they were to be looking for full-time permanent positions.

Although the responses overrepresented graduates with higher GPAs, the employment status at different GPA levels was not so varied that it misrepresented the employment status of a normal graduate population. If the employment status of these respondents is typical of all Arizona graduates of that GPA level, it could be roughly estimated that 63% of all Arizona high school graduates are employed one year after graduation; 26% are unemployed and seeking employment; and 11% are unemployed but not seeking employment.

The graduates were asked, "What is/was the biggest problem you have had in finding employment?" Half the respondents did not answer the question or did not have any problems finding employment. Of those who responded to the question, the most frequent response blamed the labor market or the current economic conditions: "There are no jobs (or not enough jobs) open." The perpetual predicament of getting a first job without having prior experience was mentioned frequently. Students have problems finding a position where they can work around their class schedule or during the summer only. The following table lists the problems graduates face in finding employment, in decreasing order of occurrence.

[10] Percentages for those who were seeking work total more than the unemployed because the respondents could indicate more than one status.

Table 16
Problems in Finding Employment

Problem	Number	% of Responses
No jobs (not enough jobs)	193	29%
No experience	156	23%
Scheduling around classes	91	14%
Have no skills to offer	50	7%
No jobs that interest me	42	6%
Low salary - not enough to live on	36	5%
No transportation	27	4%
Not enough time to work or look	19	3%
Age - too young	18	3%
Lack job-seeking skills	13	2%
Discrimination	10	1%

Other probems mentioned infrequently were location, child care, language problems, not being a citizen, and physical handicaps. Males were more likely than females to complain about discrimination; females were more likely than males to complain about their lack of experience and scheduling around classes. There were no significant differences in the reasons expressed by the different ethnic groups.

There were several interesting correlations of the graduates' high school GPAs with problems finding employment. Graduates with higher GPAs were more likely to complain that there were no jobs or not enough jobs, no jobs in fields that interested them, and of course, scheduling around college classes. Graduates with lower GPAs were more likely to complain that they lacked experience, skills, or transportation.

E. Military Service

Only four percent of all the respondents were enlisted in military service, but that represented seven percent of the male respondents and one percent of the female respondents. The proportion was approximately the same for White, Hispanic, and American Indian graduates. None of the Black or Asian male respondents was enlisted.

Graduates with GPAs of 3.25 or below were more likely to enlist than those with higher GPAs.

F. Graduates Who Had Not Enrolled, Were Unemployed, and Were Not in Military Service

There were 34 respondents who had not enrolled in school (or enrolled and dropped out before receiving any credits), had not worked since graduation, and were not in military service. This represents about three percent of the sample. Of these, approximately half were seeking employment and half were not. Seven of the 14 who indicated they were not seeking employment also indicated they were in an unpaid position, such as homemaker or LDS missionary. In addition to these 34 respondents, there were another 25 graduates who had only worked one to three months since graduation, and 19 of them were seeking employment.

Graduates who have chosen not to be enrolled or gainfully employed immediately after graduation may, nonetheless, be on the path to accomplishing their goals. These students are of less concern than graduates who are unemployed and not in school but would like to be enrolled or employed. Did the school system fail to prepare them for their life goals? Very few of the respondents who fell into this category offered comments, but there were some comments that aid in understanding their situations: "Resource class didn't help to see that jobs could be found for kids that are slow," "Schools need to teach life in the real world and job education more," and "I finished high school early so I could earn money to go to college with my classmates... I've been looking for work a year and a half now."

In general, the graduates in this category who were seeking employment had lower GPAs than the respondents who were enrolled or employed. Half of the white students in this category were seeking employment; three-fourths of the Hispanic and Indian graduates were seeking employment.

Since students with higher GPAs were more likely to respond to the survey, it is logical to assume that students who have not been enrolled or employed might be less likely to return a survey. A projection of these responses (by GPA) suggests that the proportion of graduates in the general population who are not enrolled or gainfully employed one year after graduation could be around nine percent, 80% of them unsuccessfully seeking employment.

G. High School as Preparation for the Future

Respondents were asked to rate their high school experience in two ways: academically and otherwise[11]. These respondents were quite satisfied with their preparation: 85% rated their

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[11] The term "otherwise" was not specifically defined, but was meant to isolate their perceptions of academic preparation from their perceptions of other services, sports, arts, and social programs. Almost one-fourth of the respondents failed to rate their school in the "otherwise" column, probably indicating confusion about the question. Schools with the highest ratings on factors other than academics were: Camelback (100% rated "Very Good"), Red Mountain (67%), University (67%), Apache Junction (58%), St. David (54%), and Casa Grande (53%).

high school's academics as "Very Good" or "Satisfactory" preparation for the future. Thirty percent gave their high school the highest rating academically; 13% gave their high school the highest rating on both factors. Only five percent gave their high school the lowest rating on both factors.

High schools with the best academic ratings were University (100% rated "Very Good"), Dobson (73%), Arcadia (67%), Central (67%), Rincon (67%), Horizon (63%), St. David (61%) and North (60%).

Those who enrolled in a post-secondary program were more likely (31%) to rate their high schools very good academically than those who did not enroll (20%). In particular, graduates who were attending out-of-state universities were likely to rate their high schools very good (45%). Students with high GPAs in high school (3.25 or higher) were two to three times more likely to feel well prepared academically.

Asian graduates were the most likely to rate their high school academic preparation very good (40%); White and Hispanic graduates were the most likely to rate their schools poor (15% and 13% respectively). Those who had not been employed since graduation were more likely than those who had been employed to complain that their high school preparation was poor.

The comments from graduates who rated their high school academic program "Poor" consistently indicated that the graduates believed they should have been challenged more in high school than they had been. Complaints about math and English deficiencies were common among those who had enrolled in post-secondary programs. These are some of their comments:

> "... needed six classes in math and English to make up deficiencies (before taking college classes)"
> "Graduation requirements should be tougher."
> "They didn't push me enough."
> "Unimportant subjects (are) taught."
> "Schools are turning out functionally illiterate."
> "... (classes are) mundane and boring."
> "Teachers should have been tougher."
> "I had good grades (in high school), but was unprepared even for community college."
> "...wasted years...no preparation at all."
> "The school is not capable of providing quality education."

The table on the following page shows the proportion of respondents who rated their schools' academic program "Very Good" or "Poor". (All other respondents rated their schools "Satisfactory".)

Table 17
Ratings of High Schools as Academic Preparation for the Future

	Very Good	Poor		Very Good	Poor
Agua Fria	36%	3%	Maricopa	20%	20%
Ajo	33%	0%	Maryvale	13%	13%
Alhambra	0%	0%	McClintock	33%	17%
Amphitheater	21%	21%	Mesa	40%	0%
Apache Junction	39%	8%	Mohave	47%	24%
Apollo	14%	0%	Moon Valley	50%	25%
Arcadia	67%	0%	Morenci	31%	8%
Barry Goldwater	22%	22%	Mountain View	40%	0%
Bisbee	0%	38%	Nogales	22%	30%
Bradshaw Mtn.	31%	31%	North	60%	20%
Buena	24%	17%	Palo Verde	20%	0%
Cactus	33%	8%	Paradise Valley	41%	12%
Cactus Shadows	24%	19%	Parker	33%	0%
Camelback	25%	25%	Payson	24%	12%
Canyon Del Oro	50%	0%	Peoria	23%	13%
Carl Hayden	40%	0%	Pima	14%	43%
Casa Grande	27%	18%	Prescott	28%	3%
Catalina	0%	50%	Pueblo	0%	0%
Central	67%	33%	Queen Creek	39%	31%
Chandler	46%	7%	Ray	10%	40%
Chaparral	12%	18%	Red Mountain	50%	17%
Cholla	40%	40%	Rincon	67%	0%
Cibola	0%	0%	Sabino	20%	20%
Coconino	8%	17%	Safford	28%	16%
Corona Del Sol	31%	8%	Saguaro	23%	15%
Coronado	29%	29%	Sahuaro	11%	44%
Cortez	50%	0%	Santa Rita	22%	44%
Deer Valley	25%	22%	Shadow Mountain	27%	9%
Desert View	31%	6%	Show Low	26%	9%
Dobson	73%	13%	South Mountain	20%	40%
Douglas	42%	5%	St. David	61%	17%
Duncan	33%	33%	St. Johns	35%	9%
Dysart	0%	44%	Sunnyside	22%	17%
Flagstaff	45%	21%	Sunnyslope	0%	0%
Fredonia	13%	13%	Tempe	33%	22%
Gilbert	42%	4%	Thunderbird	0%	20%
Glendale	50%	0%	Tolleson	32%	4%
Globe	20%	12%	Trevor Browne	0%	0%
Greenway	0%	0%	Tucson	0%	0%
Hayden	50%	17%	University	100%	0%
Horizon	63%	0%	Washington	20%	60%
Independence	17%	17%	Westwood	55%	0%
Ironwood	19%	15%	Window Rock	18%	0%
Kingman	27%	18%	Winslow	18%	14%
Kofa	30%	0%	Yuma	11%	33%
Marcos de Niza	43%	29%			

H. Highest Level of Parents' Education

Respondents were asked to report the highest level of their parents' formal education. The table below shows the proportion of respondents indicating parents' education at each level. Parents' education was positively correlated with the graduate's enrollment in a post-secondary education program.

Table 18
Highest Level of Parents' Formal Education

Less than high school education	8%
High school diploma	17%
Some college education	32%
College degree - 4 years	18%
Some postgraduate education	8%
Postgraduate degree	15%
parents' education not shown	1%

I. Respondents' Comments

Some of the respondents took advantage of the opportunity to make additional comments on the survey form. Some of the typical comments are printed in Appendix E.

There were four times as many derogatory comments as positive comments regarding high school as preparation for post-secondary education. Most of the specific complaints dealt with inadequate math or English classes; the general comments recommended elevating the demands of high school. Comments like "Teachers could have pushed harder, expected more," or "I was not challenged fully" were common. Several comments reflected the opinion that "Teachers are going through the motions. They don't care."

Comments about their college experiences were equally negative and positive. Fifteen respondents commented on the need for and difficulty of obtaining financial aid for college.

J. Trends: Comparisons to the Class of 1989

The study conducted last year surveyed graduates from the Class of 1989 to determine their activities two years after graduation. The sample size and ethnic/gender representation were about the same as this year's survey of the Class of 1991.

Enrollment in post-secondary education was down from 86% of the Class of 1989 to 82% of the Class of 1991. In the general population of Arizona high school graduates, it is estimated that

enrollment declined from 67% of the 1989 graduates to 63% of the 1991 graduates. The decline was noticed in all ethnic groups except Asians. The most serious decline in enrollment was in the American Indian population, which declined from 87% of the 1989 respondents to 58% of the 1991 respondents[12]. The table below shows the proportion of respondents in each ethnic group who enrolled in a post-secondary program.

Table 19
Enrollment in Post-Secondary Education by Ethnicity

	Class of 1989			Class of 1991		
Ethnic Group	Respondents	Enrolled	Percent	Respondents	Enrolled	Percent
White	1,082	931	86%	982	820	84%
Black	16	15	94%	18	16	89%
Hispanic	201	161	81%	251	193	77%
American Indian	38	33	87%	52	30	58%
Asian	39	36	92%	31	30	97%

Females were slightly more likely in 1991 (91%) than in 1989 (87%) to intend to continue their education, but fewer actually enrolled (87% in 1991 vs. 89% in 1989). Graduates with lower high school GPAs were less likely to enroll in 1991 than they were in 1989.

More graduates chose Arizona schools for college and university level classes than in 1989 and fewer chose technical training programs[13]. There was a shift from in-state universities to in-state community colleges. In 1989, 35% of those who enrolled in a post-secondary program chose community colleges; 50% of the 1991 post-secondary students made that choice. In-state universities lost students at all GPA levels, but the loss was greater from higher GPA levels. Out-of-state universities retained their "market share" on all GPA levels and there was a large increase in the proportion of students with the highest GPAs attending out-of-state universities. In 1989, 22% of those with GPAs over 4.25 chose out-of-state universities; in 1991, 48% of respondents with the highest GPAs went to an out-of-state university.

Employment also declined between the two studies. While 75% of the respondents from the Class of 1989 were gainfully employed, 63% of the respondents in 1991 were currently employed. Part of the difference may be due to the timing of the surveys: the Class of 1989 was surveyed two years after graduation, the Class of 1991 was surveyed one year later. The additional year may have given some graduates the time and incentive to find employment.

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[12] The drop in Indian enrollment was more serious for Indian males (from 82% to 48%) than for Indian females (89% to 67%). There were proportionately more Indian male respondents in this survey than in the Class of 1989 survey, which may have amplified the measured decline in enrollment.

[13] The distinction between in-state and out-of-state schools is not precise because the surveys did not distinguish between in-state and out-of-state technical training programs, and last year's survey did not distinguish in-state from out-of-state community colleges if the graduate had completed the program.

A higher proportion of those who were unemployed were seeking full-time work -- 19% of the 1991 graduates were looking for a full-time permanent position, compared to 13% in 1989. In 1989, more than half of the unemployed (58%) were not seeking work; about a third (34%) of the 1991 graduates were unemployed by choice.

Declining employment was noticed in all ethnic groups, but it was most noticeable in the Hispanic and American Indian population. The table below compares employment status for the two studies by ethnicity.

Table 20
Employment Status by Ethnicity

Ethnic Group	Class of 1989	Class of 1991
Employed		
White	77%	69%
Black	69%	61%
Hispanic	75%	52%
American Indian	42%	27%
Asian	54%	45%
Unemployed, Seeking FT		
White	2%	14%
Black	6%	22%
Hispanic	8%	24%
American Indian	18%	56%
Asian	5%	23%
Unemployed, Not Seeking Employment		
White	10%	12%
Black	25%	11%
Hispanic	7%	13%
American Indian	13%	10%
Asian	18%	23%

About five percent of the respondents were enlisted in military service in both studies. About five percent of the Class of 1989 respondents had not enrolled in school, were unemployed and were not in military service two years after graduation. In this study, about three percent of the respondents fell into that category. In both studies, approximately half of those graduates were seeking employment and half were unemployed by choice or were employed in unpaid positions.

The respondents' ratings of their high school experience as preparation for the future remained the same in both studies. Approximately 85% of the respondents in both classes rated their preparation "Very Good" or "Satisfactory".

METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

A. Sampling Methodology

Fifty districts were selected to participate in the survey, based on the following criteria:

- o One-third of the districts with more than 33 and fewer than 100 graduates, surveying all of their graduates;
- o One-half of the districts with 100 to 300 graduates, surveying approximately 50% of their graduates.
- o All districts with more than 300 graduates, surveying approximately 25% of the graduates in districts with 300 to 600 graduates; 20% of graduates in districts with 600 to 1000 students; and 5 to 10% of graduates in districts with more than 1000 graduates.

Districts were selected to represent each county, approximating the proportions surveyed to each county's proportion of graduates. Districts were asked to provide name and address labels for randomly selected graduates in the Class of 1991. The number of labels requested from each district was a multiple of 33, with a maximum of 165 requested from any district.

The study sample represented districts of the following size (number of completers):

Number of Completers	Number of Districts	Sample	Grads. to Survey
37 - 79	11	33	363
84 - 154	11	66	726
163 - 272	7	99	693
312 - 449	7	132	924
540 -3285	14	165	2,310
TOTAL	50		5,016

The sample represented slightly more than 15% of the Class of 1991 graduates and completers. Three districts did not submit labels for the study; those labels were replaced with additional labels from other participating districts.

B. Survey Methodology

A total of 5,288 graduates were mailed the survey form and a cover letter during May and June 1992. Three hundred fifty eight surveys were returned by the postal service as undeliverable. Completed questionnaires were received from 1,347 graduates. The response rate was 27% of surveys presumed to have been received by the intended graduate. Participating school districts were given the option of personalizing the cover letter which accompanied the survey. The response rate was higher than the mean for six of the seven districts which provided cover letters signed by a local official[13].

Responses were entered into a dBase IV file and analyzed by SPSS/PC+, a computer program for statistical analysis. The respondents' comments printed here may have been abbreviated but were unedited for spelling, punctuation, or grammatical errors.

C. Limitations

Certain factors in the sampling and survey methodology adversely affected either the response rate or the validity of the survey data.

- Although random sampling techniques were used in the selection of graduate names to be surveyed, it is possible that the original sample was not representative of all graduates from Arizona public high schools in 1991.
- The responses overrepresented graduates with higher cumulative GPAs.
- White and female graduates were more likely to respond to the survey.

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[13] Flagstaff Unified, Mesa Unified, Gilbert Unified, Chandler Unified, Agua Fria Union High School, and Tucson Unified districts had response rates greater than the mean (27%). Window Rock Unified District also provided a cover letter, but the response rate was lower than the mean.

RESPONSE RATE FOR PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

District	Sent	Ret'd.	Sample	Responses	Rate
St. Johns Unified	66	0	66	24	36%
Window Rock Unified	66	2	64	14	22%
Apache Co.	**132**	**2**	**130**	**38**	**29%**
Bisbee Unified	66	3	63	16	25%
Douglas Unified	94	7	87	19	22%
Sierra Vista Unified	135	9	126	43	34%
St. David Unified	33	0	33	18	55%
Cochise Co.	**328**	**19**	**309**	**96**	**31%**
Flagstaff Unified	155	17	138	42	30%
Fredonia-Moccasin	33	0	33	8	24%
Coconino Co.	**188**	**17**	**171**	**50**	**29%**
Globe Unified	156	4	152	27	18%
Hayden-Winkelman Unified	33	0	33	6	18%
Payson Unified	66	0	66	18	27%
Gila Co.	**255**	**4**	**251**	**51**	**20%**
Pima Unified	33	0	33	7	21%
Safford Unified	123	9	114	26	23%
Graham Co.	**156**	**9**	**147**	**33**	**22%**
Duncan Unified	33	0	33	7	21%
Morenci Unified	33	0	33	13	39%
Greenlee Co.	**66**	**0**	**66**	**20**	**30%**
Parker Unified	66	3	63	9	14%
La Paz Co.	**66**	**3**	**63**	**9**	**14%**
Agua Fria Union High	100	5	95	39	41%
Cave Creek Unified	78	4	74	21	28%
Chandler Unified	132	7	125	42	34%
Deer Valley Unified	165	10	155	50	32%
Dysart Unified	66	9	57	9	16%
Gilbert Unified	165	20	145	45	31%
Glendale Union High	180	11	169	49	29%
Mesa Unified	165	8	157	58	37%

District	Sent	Ret'd.	Sample	Responses	Rate
Paradise Valley Unified	167	9	158	44	28%
Peoria Unified	495	39	456	131	29%
Phoenix Union High	141	11	130	40	31%
Queen Creek Unified	42	4	38	13	34%
Scottsdale Unified	165	14	151	43	28%
Tempe Union High	180	9	171	41	24%
Tolleson Union High	132	10	122	25	20%
Maricopa Co.	**2373**	**170**	**2203**	**650**	**30%**
Colorado River Union High	88	17	71	17	24%
Mohave Union High	100	3	97	23	24%
Mohave Co.	**188**	**20**	**168**	**40**	**24%**
Show Low Unified	89	3	86	24	28%
Winslow Unified	157	7	150	29	19%
Navajo Co.	**246**	**10**	**236**	**53**	**22%**
Ajo Unified	33	0	33	9	27%
Amphitheater Unified	165	13	152	41	27%
Sunnyside Unified	165	0	165	44	27%
Tucson Unified	165	7	158	48	30%
Pima Co.	**528**	**20**	**508**	**142**	**28%**
Apache Junction Unified	66	6	60	13	22%
Casa Grande Union High	132	9	123	22	18%
Maricopa Unified	33	2	31	5	16%
Ray Unified	33	0	33	11	33%
Pinal Co.	**264**	**17**	**247**	**51**	**21%**
Nogales Unified	132	32	100	24	24%
Santa Cruz Co.	**132**	**32**	**100**	**24**	**24%**
Humboldt Unified	66	9	57	16	28%
Prescott Unified	132	15	117	40	34%
Yavapai Co.	**198**	**24**	**174**	**56**	**32%**
Yuma Union High	168	11	157	24	15%
Yuma Co.	**168**	**11**	**157**	**24**	**15%**
TOTAL	**5288**	**358**	**4930**	**1347**	**27%**

APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER AND SURVEY FORM

Arizona
Department of Education

C. DIANE BISHOP
Superintendent

Dear Class of 1991 Graduate:

The Arizona State Legislature has asked the Department of Education to survey the graduates of Arizona high schools to determine, in part, how well they were prepared in high school for accomplishing their goals, and to see what proportion of graduates continue their education, enter the labor force, and choose other options. Your name was selected in a random sampling of the 1991 public school graduates to help with the assessment.

As a graduate of an Arizona high school, you have insight and experience that will provide important information for the study. Whether your experiences during high school and the past year have been positive or negative, your opinions and activities are indicators of the school's success in preparing its graduates for the future. Because the survey has been mailed to only 15% of the 1991 graduates, every response is extremely important. Your answers are completely confidential. The Department of Education will analyze the responses from all the graduates and report the totals (but not individual responses) back to the high schools and the Legislature.

The enclosed survey can be completed very quickly and a postage paid envelope is also enclosed for your convenience. Please take a minute now to check off your responses and return the survey before July 15, 1992. Thank you for your help, and best wishes to you for a happy and successful future.

Sincerely,

Caryn R Shoemaker

Caryn R. Shoemaker
Research and Statistical Analyst
School Finance

• 1535 West Jefferson, Phoenix, Arizona 85007 •
602-542-4361

1991 GRADUATE ACTIVITY SURVEY

1. At graduation, what were your plans for the following year? (Check all that apply.)

		Full-time	Part-time
A.	Continue my education	____	____
B.	Be employed	____	____
C.	Serve in the military	____	____
D.	Be a homemaker or volunteer	____	____
E.	Other _____		

2. Did you enroll in an educational program after high school?

Yes _____ (Continue.) No _____ (Skip to question 3.)

If so, which of the following describes your enrollment during the past year? (Check all that apply.)

		Full-time	Part-time
A.	Enrolled in a four year university in Arizona	____	____
B.	Enrolled in a four year university out of state	____	____
C.	Enrolled in a community college in Arizona	____	____
D.	Enrolled in a community college out of state	____	____
E.	Enrolled in technical training (non-military)	____	____
F.	Enrolled in technical training (military)	____	____
G.	Enrolled in a school, but discontinued before the year was over		_____
H.	Other _____		

Number of college credits earned _____ Grade Point Average in college _____

3. Do you intend to enroll in classes for the 1992-93 school year? Yes ____ No ____

4. If you were enrolled in classes in 1991-92 and either discontinued before the year was over OR you do not intend to re-enroll for 1992-93, what was the primary reason for discontinuing?

A.	Academic problems	_____
B.	Financial problems	_____
C.	Other personal problems (illness, etc.)	_____
D.	Did not like the school/program	_____
E.	Finished the program	_____
F.	Other: _____	

5. Since graduation, have you been employed in a <u>paid</u> position?

Yes, full-time for ____ months Yes, part-time for ____ months No _____

6. **If you are not currently employed in a paid position, which of the following statements describes your status ? (Check all that apply.)**

A. Employed in an unpaid position (homemaker, LDS mission, volunteer) _____
B. Seeking full-time paid employment (summer only) _____
C. Seeking full-time paid employment (permanent) _____
D. Seeking part-time paid employment _____
E. I am not seeking employment. _____

7. **What is/was the biggest problem you have had in finding employment?** _____

_____

8. **Are you currently serving in the military?** Yes _____ No _____

9. **How would you rate your high school experience in regard to preparing you for the future?**

		Academically	Otherwise
A.	Very Good	_____	_____
B.	Satisfactory	_____	_____
C.	Poor	_____	_____

10. **Ethnic Group:**

White _____ Black _____ Hispanic _____ Indian _____ Asian _____

11. **Sex:** Female _____ Male _____

12. **Graduated from** _____ High School

13. **Grade Point Average at Graduation** _____ (On a scale where A = 4.0)

14. **Highest level of your parents' formal education:**

Less than high school education	____	College degree - 4 yrs.	____
High school diploma	____	Some postgraduate education	____
Some college education	____	Postgraduate degree	____

15. **(Optional) Would you be willing to provide the Arizona Department of Education more information about your activities since high school?** If so,

Your name: _____ Telephone:_____

If you have other comments about your activity since graduation, please use the back side of this page. Your survey answers are considered confidential and will not be reported individually. Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. Arizona Department of Education

APPENDIX D

INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
1535 W. JEFFERSON ST.
PHOENIX, AZ 85007

CARYN R. SHOEMAKER
SCHOOL FINANCE UNIT
(602) 542-3652

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 1992
TO: District Superintendents
FROM: Caryn R. Shoemaker
SUBJECT: Class of 1991 Graduate Outcome Study

As part of the Goals for Educational Excellence legislation, the Arizona Department of Education has been mandated to study high school graduate outcomes. Last year's study of the Class of 1989 established a baseline measurement of the proportion of graduates who continue their education, seek employment, enter military service, or choose other options. In that study, 44 districts (70 high schools) were asked to participate. The final report was mailed to you in December 1991.

This year we will survey approximately 15% of the graduates from the Class of 1991. Fifty districts were specifically selected based on the size of the district's population and the number of graduates from each county. Arizona Department of Education will conduct all phases of the study, including the mailing of surveys; receiving, tallying and analyzing of responses; and writing the report for the Legislature. However, we need your cooperation in the selection of graduates to be surveyed.

As soon as possible, but no later than June 12, 1992, please provide on adhesive labels or in label format, the names and last known addresses for ____ of the students who graduated from your district a year ago, in the spring of 1991. The names should be randomly selected from a list of graduates from your high school(s). Do <u>not</u> attempt to select specific graduates on the basis of their achievement, ethnicity, gender or any other criterion. If you cannot provide the names and addresses on adhesive mailing labels, please have the names and addresses typed according to the enclosed label format.

The survey will have a cover letter to the graduates, stressing the need for their cooperation. If you believe the cover letter would be more effective if it were signed by you, the principal, or a well-known alumnus, please prepare a letter similar to the one enclosed, reproduce it on your letterhead, sign, and return it to me with the labels.

Thank you for your cooperation on this important study. I expect the final report and the summary of responses from your graduates will be finished by October. As always, we hope the information produced will be helpful to you in strategic planning for your school, and an incentive to improve the quality of education in Arizona.

RESPONDENTS' COMMENTS

The following comments were selected from the surveys, extracted as written to preserve the student's expressions, spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Some comments have been abbreviated.

COMMENTS REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL AS PREPARATION FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION:

RECORD #13: I was not prepared in any way, shape, or form for the work force or college. In fact the woman in charge of the career center strongly encouraged me to forget about higher education. My years in high school were, by far, the most wasted years of my life.

RECORD #28: I was extremely disappointed in the preparation I received from __ High for my future. Although I received extremely satisfactory grades from __, I was not introduced to any financial aid opportunities or even the SAT & ACT tests. As a result of my unpreparedness, I felt very unable to even approach the MCC campus, and it was evident to me that I was behind the other students in terms of being capable of starting school. I did have some extremely inspirational teachers, but the counseling staff was virtually invisible.

RECORD #131: I think __ High School prepared me very well for a community college. I felt I could handle my classes very easily. During my first semester at the college I earned a GPA of 4.0 and I went into my second semester with great confidence and I earned a scholarship for another year. I felt the classes I took during my junior and senior years helped contribute to my great start in college.

RECORD #186: The Fall of 91, I was realizing I didn't seem to have good high school prep for college. The teachers should have been more demanding & tougher graders. I should have had much more work in vocabulary. I had practically none my senior year. My math training was a disaster. Both in Algebra & Geometry I had teachers come & go or too involved in outside activities. I had subs constantly both years. I know alot of learning is my reponsibility, but, it was very tough when nothing was consistant.

RECORD #188: High School and Colleges are two different worlds. High school dosen't prepare an individual enough to take on the "real world".

RECORD #200: I feel that my freshmen year of college that I took classes I should have had during High School. Now I am ready for college.

RECORD #276: In college I was required to take 2 pre-college math courses to be eligible for college Algebra. I also had alot of problems with English, where my highschool lacked in fully teaching me the basics of English. I found that, my Junior Highschool lacking in abilities to prepare me for my highschool.

RECORD #432: College has been great! It's the best experience I've ever had. I worked hard and got good grades, but that is only because I learned to be responsible for myself when I was younger. Thank God my mom taught me responsibility and prepared me for college because high school sure didn't.

RECORD #494: My educaton at ___ was good, but it did not begin to prepare me for college. I had some wonderful teachers in high school and they taught me whatever they were able to, but it was not enough. The things taught in high schools in Arizona should be taught in Junior High, because it is not challenging enough in high school. In high school, I was in the National Honor Society and was actively involved in 3 sports all four years of school. At Yavapai College, I am in the College Honors Program and have an almost full-ride scholarship. My

success in college cannot be contributed to my high school education because it did not begin to prepare me for college. Thank you for taking the time to ask these questions and caring enough about Arizona high school students to want to improve the education of future graduates.

RECORD #529: While I was in high school, I was very involved in many organizations, teams, clubs etc. This helped me tremendously in college because I learned by becoming involved in other activities besides academics, I got the support I needed. I was able to stay balanced with studies and extra-curricular activities which helped make my transition from high school to college much easier.

RECORD #538: I feel many things should change in the school district, but most important . . . teens should be prepared for college or other activities after high school, not just pushed through. The school district needs to get tougher, like the East Coast education system.

RECORD #546: Since High School I have had a Really hard time with going on with my education. My High School didn't really help me as far as math and English goes. Most people start in Eng 101 and College algebra when they get into college. I have to take about 4 math classes and 2 English classes before I get any college credits. About 20 of my friends need to also.

RECORD #551: The H.S. graduation Requirements for anybody (college bound or not) should Be much tougher. there should also be many more writing classes and many more essay test with critical thinking involved. In other words; I'm saying that the school system(s) should stop playing nursemaid and "Babysitter" to secondary students and get Back to teaching the Basics - reading, writing, science, math and most of all critical thinking!

RECORD #554: I think my high school didn't push me enough to attened college. But the Nizohni/Upward Bound Program (N.A.U. Educational Support Program) really helped me, to think more of myself. Most of the teachers at __ think more about sports then academics. I also think that I was discriminated against by a counselor.

RECORD #622: I feel the high schools should be more stricter on academic performances to prepare the youths of Az. for further Education. I thought I was prepared; boy was I surprised. I have had a vary hard time at the junior college that I attended.

RECORD #629: I feel that teachers could have pushed harder, expected more of students. I was able to "get by" without studying very often. However, college assumes you have study habits already and I never developed them in H.S.

RECORD #679: High schools need to concentrate more on edgucating their students in math. every student entering college should be at the calculus level or higher. It's too hard to learn in college with the fast pace and the all too many "bad Teachers."

RECORD #721: More attention needs to be focused on allowing students to <u>work</u> for a diploma. In my four years of high school, I saw too many students swept through the system, without an education or behavioral skills. In college, I see many students suffering because of the lack of base education provided for them. Instructors <u>must</u> force students to comply with mandated educational skills. Possibly beyond course grades, a nationalized standard test for graduation.

RECORD #723: All technical courses such as Algebra and Chemistry seemed geared towards promoting failure rather than success as a result I was simply not prepared to advance to a 4-year university or college without making up some deficiencies at the community college. In general the curiculum at __ High School is aimed at approximately 80% of the students going into a vocation directly from high school, but the typical vocational student is not academically prepared to enter his/her chosen vocation out of high school whether that be truck driving, construction work, or even restaurant work.

RECORD #750: After completing one year of college, I have found that my high school and lower

education satisfactorily prepared me. This mediocre satisfaction, however, came from honor or advanced classes that I had taken in the past. If I had only taken regular classes, I believe I would have had a much more difficult time at a university level.

RECORD #770: Our schools are turning out fuctionally illiterate people into our society. A High School Diploma is essentially an attendance certificate. Arizona graduation requirements are so low that universities are having to add remiedial coures to their ciricullum! That is appolling! I attribute my college success to a supporting family, caring instructors and the discipline I gained from the United States Marine Corps.

RECORD #880: My parents relocated to Las Vegas for my fathers job. Enrolling in a public university here (UNLV) has helped me gain better appreciation for Arizona education. I found myself better cultured and open to educational ideas than my Nevada counterparts. My foreign language exposure was more intricate, being open to cultural activities and hands-on labs/discussions. Local educators compared my high school experience to low level university courses. They were surprised by my ability to succeed in their higher level programs.

RECORD #917: I have found that college isn't any harder than high school. At least where I'm going.

RECORD #946: School did not get me ready for any work or to farther my Ed. A lot time was wasted in School. Tradschool is the only answer.

RECORD #1099: High schools help prepare a person for a society or social place that is like high school. And the sports to some kids, like myself, thats about the only thing that keeps their grades up - their shouldnt be that much pressure on the althletic side. More should be put on the academic side. School didn't mean a whole lot. Going to a college was a totally new exprience and alot harder than I expected. Alot more studying, and less attention from the teachers.

RECORD #1153: My high school was not tough enough. I was not challenged fully. They babied us so much that adjusting to college courses was somewhat difficult.

RECORD #1217: My complaint is the lack of preparation (academicaly) for college. Even though I had taken College Prep Writing, they made me take English 105 (honors) where I didn't even learn anything new, in fact, I didn't learn a thing that I learned in CP writing. I had to take Intro to Algebra, after recieving A's and B's in my high school math courses (up to College Alg. trigonometry).

RECORD #1231: (1) students should be required to take a typing class as well as a foreign language. (2) Should have an opportunity to get into a program that lets you take college classes. (3) I also feel that their should be more scolarships for students. There are some that would like to apply but cant because there grade point is to low. (4) Also high schools need more tutoring for the students who need help. (5) More programs for ESL students for are trying their best to contiue college.

COMMENTS REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL AS PREPARATION FOR OTHER GOALS:

RECORD #55: I feel very well prepared for life, except for a few things. I wish typing and/or computer classes had been required or more strongly recommended. I am also concerned that handicapped and slower students aren't getting a fair shake in quality teaching. The classes I witnessed or overheard from the hall or the library were more abusive than productive or nurturing.

RECORD #322: Resource class didn't help to see that a job could be found for these kids that are slow!!!!

RECORD #338: C— was provided an education, but not survival skills for civilian life.

RECORD #362: Something that may help students prepare for the world outside of high school, If they had more information (computer) in their libraries to benefit the students in which if anybody had a question about any job it would automatically give them information (college courses, location) on that specific job.

RECORD #465: In my opinion kids in high school should be disciplined a bit more, and someone must tell them what life is like after gradution. Because I came out thinking that I would be partying whatever I wanted, but when I graduated nothing was diffrent; except that I was scared to death, of the future.

RECORD #468: The out-of-state students I met in college seemed to feel as as though they had accomplished something in high school. Arizona schools are too easy and they do not have enough money.

RECORD #603: I felt my counselors at school did not provide enough information & help throughout high school. I also feel my principle was too negative on extra-curricular activities.

RECORD #612: I feel like too much time is wasted in the classrooms. Buzy work is often a morale killer and is not helpful. I would have enjoyed more personal insights on the part of the professors. The school system should be preparing to implement a "community school program" as opposed to the traditional K-12, 8-3 o'clock school classroom system.

RECORD #635: I feel it is extremely important for the high school students have mandatory on-the-job training. I took COE, and found it very helpful. Also more money should be spent on education rather than sports!

RECORD #644: In looking for jobs, I've often wished that taking a computer class was mandatory. While in high school I really struggled all four years to try and understand Algebra and any kind of science I had to take. I feel that all though I would need them for college, they were a major waste of time for me. I go and apply for jobs and the last thing they ever ask is if I completed my "necessary" math and science quatas. What they do want to know is what kind of computer skills or medical skills I have. I felt unprepared for the job field leaving school. Because all of the mandatory math & science classes, I never had time to take any sort of computer class that would better prepare me for the future.

RECORD #967: I had to teach myself basic Algebra to get myself in the navy.

RECORD #1121: The business classes I took where I got my current job proved to be PRICELESS! Skills and experience are what most graduates are lacking - but I was fortunate enough to be chosen for COE, and it is probably the best decision I made in high school.

RECORD #1214: I think the best part of my high school education that helped me get the most prepared and trained was the agriculture department. The teach practical workman skills, very good landscaping and plant identification, and they unlike a normal teacher know all students on a one on one basis and care about students better and expect more from their students.

COMMENTS REGARDING OTHER SPECIFIC CONDITIONS IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS:

RECORD #241: Teachers make the difference in learning. I believe one learns more from a teacher with a positive attitude and a fun learning style. Administration at __ did not seem to care about the student.

RECORD #289: Our system is way too political. Teachers aren't supported, they are destroyed. There is a struggle between our administration and our principal and teaching staff. A staff that is constantly being harrassed and manipulated can't do a good job teaching. Only the top students can acheive any degree of success. The situation here is very very sad.

RECORD #307: It seems that more and more teachers are just going through the motions. The majority

of teachers don't seem like they care about anything but the end of each day. There are still some exceptionally good teachers who care. They make it seem like they are enjoying what they are doing which encourages students in taking an interest in learning.

RECORD #401: Nothing to Challenge Imagination. Mundane & Boring. Teachers Don't care.

RECORD #403: __ high did not offer the quality deserved - To many low income to allow quality Education. The quality of classes were geared at very low level. Not enough of varity of classes were offered. Most students cannot even complete a job application correctly. Teachers could care less.

RECORD #526: Could have better control on gangs, inside and outside of schools. Some class rooms over crowded. Have more teacher awarenees, for children having problems.

RECORD #528: The highschool needs to be re-done to the point where students feel comfortable when learning. Stricter rules need to be set so some of these teenagers can learn discipline and respect. More foreign languages should be offered. Academics should be more focused than sports. Guest speakers should visit more often to talk to the students about current affairs. Teachers should care for all students and notify parents if student is in trouble. A big brother/big sister teen group should be set up for troubled students - Popular students should not always get positions. When students enter senior year of school, the counselor should talk about how to apply for scholarships and financial aid. Programs at the schools can be improved if the budget stops to be cut back. School officials should realize that the reason teenagers quit school is because they aren't encouraged enough.

RECORD #572: Since graduating from high school, I have participated in athletic events and club and organizations. The jobs I hold, I feel I was chosen for because of my performance in high school & the opportunities I had to participate in athletics, clubs and student government positions. I think that the importance of extra-curricular activities along with strong academic performance should be stressed.

RECORD #995: (1) More time needs to be given to students so they can have more oppurtunities to visit with counselor. (2) Students need to be given the chance to take courses which will be needed in their future career choice. There is too much influence/importance placed on Eng., Alg., etc. and barely any importance is placed on electives. There aren't all that many electives to chose from. (3) Teachers need to be watched more closely in the classroom. (4) More importance needs to be placed on the arts program.

RECORD #1031: I am a handicap child and during high school I lived a very hard life with normal kids. I am now living in a group home and am having problems. During high school the teachers were not strict enough and they would let me get away with murder. So now that is the way I am. The schools had no curriculum such as special olympics or the other stuff like the old school system did. They could not handle us.

RECORD #1309: I am written you to imform you of the following: __ have made a lot of changes for the good! I would improve it by making the English Department stronger. I would started by having the students read more books. By reading more book, it would help the student in two ways. One way would be to increase the vocabulary and also help improve the students speech. The second reason would be, it would prepare the student for the numerous page books each class must read.

RECORD #1322: Study skills and time management were two key areas not covered that would've helped during this transitional year.

COMMENTS REGARDING POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION EXPERIENCES:

RECORD #56: My parents told me that college would give me a unique experience. To try it and I am glad that I did. I love being in control of what I want to learn and the choice of the hours.

RECORD #88: I feel that a counselor was a big help in getting through my first year. I was also enrolled in the Pima Community College Summer Bridge Program during the 1991 summer. I got a chance to meet some of the staff and find my way around the campus. Not everybody knew about this program. I hope counselors take a more active roll in enlighentning students about such programs which are free or can receive financial aid for.

RECORD #371: I feel that the large universities in Arizona need to pay more attention to helping incoming frosh to addjust to a large univesity. Many students drop out not because they are not not smart enough but rather that they had trouble adjusting.

RECORD #694: Hated high School. Real Bad! Love College!

RECORD #871: I joined a sorority which has helped me both academicly and socially.

RECORD #894: My experience at Northern Arizona University was one of loneliness and homesickness.

RECORD #985: If someone would have shown me that I would poor, if I didn't stay in college I would probably still be in school. Highschool students can't visualize how it would be with out an education. Please encourage students to stay in school!

COMMENTS REGARDING POST-SECONDARY FINANCIAL AID:

RECORD #112: I will be attending a two year college for fashion merchandising and I have observed technical colleges are expensive but do not have the finacial aid offered to universities.

RECORD #369: These days there is an extremely large amount of college students dropping out - due to financial difficulties. There should be lower college costs, or more grants, scholarships available to all students, regardless of low academic grades.

RECORD #585: If you really want to encourage high schol graduates to continue in their schooling, you should attempt to ease their finacial burden by offering more finacial aid. Many of my friends from high school who had planned on attending college, found that they were unable to do so due to lack of financial aid. I myself am having to take out large student loans which will probably never be paid off due to the high interest.

RECORD #630: I want to become a teacher, but I can't find the tuition money - help!

RECORD #815: Since graduation I have been going to a community college near my home. I currently work two jobs and I still find it hard to afford school, even going part time. I have applied to some financial aid but was turned down for most and the other programs, I felt, that I wasn't applicable for. I feel that for "average" students it is very hard to acquire any finacial aid. Financial aid is the biggest problem for teenagers today.

RECORD #834: Financially I could not continue my education. Both my parents work & fall into the "middle income" bracket; therefore, very little financial assistance is available. Not even my grade point helped me with scholarship. Plenty of money available for low income families but there should be more programs to help people like me. Once I find employment, I will re-enroll in the local college if I can afford it.

RECORD #990: The financial aid system in this country is ridiculous. How can they expect your parents to contribute all they made during the past year. I believe the financial aid should be primarily determined by the students income. I also believe that all the scholarships and waivers offered to the top percentage of the class should be reoffered to people if they are not taken by the student. Eight out of the top ten in my class turned down all of the waivers they were offered to the big Universities because they would have rather stayed at a community college or they were going on their mission. Some of us busted our butts, but because we didn't have seminary or a class like that our GPA's were lower because we were taking 7 classes instead of 6.

RECORD #1149: I feel tuition is extremely high at Universities such as U of A or A.S.U. This stops many of us from obtaining a higher more solid education. Grants are not enough to supplement all University costs. One full-time job cannot pay for a university year these days. Also, in order to obtain financial aid in a university you have to be full-time, but financial aid is not enough and the student needs time for a full time job; sometimes even two jobs.

RECORD #1193: The largest problem with a full-time college schedule is financial stability. It was very hard working a part time job, paying rent, food, car insurance and still not having enough money - school hours got shorter and working hours increased. School became a burden not a priority, work became the #1 priority.

RECORD #1326: The biggest obstacle I have is paying for college. High school offered nothing to prepare me for that.

COMMENTS REGARDING EMPLOYMENT:

RECORD #183: I graduated in the top 10% of my class, played number one on our golf team, played on the varsity tennis team, in National Honor society, and tried to support my school. However, I did not receive a dime for my continued education. My parents make too much for me to receive money, yet it is still very expensive. I never had a job in high school because I was always either at practices after school or being involved in the community. Now when I apply for jobs I have very little experience. School activities provide discipline, team cooperation, punctuality, and hard work. However, businesses want experience. I can't find a summer job. I'm smart, a hard worker, and have a good character and reputation. Sometimes I wonder if I would have been better of working during high school and not participating as much.

RECORD #489: I have found that to get any kind of quality education, people should take a volunteer postition that might help them with their future job. That is the way to get some good experience, and build up a strong, solid resume.

RECORD #533: Full time employment for mentally handicapped is very difficult even with "help " from state agencies.

RECORD #907: While going through high school, I knew that I would be unable to afford any higher level of education upon graduation. So I worked hard studying and going to summer school in order to graduate early, work full-time, and save my money for college. I achieved part of my goal by graduating at 16 years old. I am now 17 1/2 and am still unemployed. For one year I have been filling out applications and going on interviews. I am always told the same thing: "Your application looks very good; however, you are not 18 years old." At this rate I am never going to get into college. One year has been waisted just because of an age requirement. I was told by teachers and counselors that it is impossible nowadays to receive employment without a high school diploma. I now know that it takes much more than a diploma. Now when I do turn 18 employers are going to look at my application and think that I waisted one year sitting around and being irresponsible.

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